British Columbia
Ministry of Transportation
Staff Newsletter

Road Runner

Fall 2003 On-line at http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/Roadrunners/index-roadrunners.htm

Fires rage across Interior for weeks

By Thompson-Nicola District Staff

Photo of Kamloops fire on August 1

The McLure fire started July 30 by a discarded cigarette near Highway 5. With no rain in more than six weeks, the pine needles were extremely brittle and dry, allowing the flames to travel quickly.

Due to the amount of smoke generated by the blaze, at times it was very difficult for fire crews to determine the fire's actual size. Highway 5 was closed to all but emergency personnel as up to 1,000 fire fighters struggled to contain the blaze.

To help facilitate the evacuation of residents in the surrounding area, the McLure Ferry ran 24 hours a day for three weeks. Hundreds of power poles burned, leaving towns as far away as McBride without full power for weeks.

Phones were dead and then intermittent for many days. Seventeen kilometres of Schedule 2 fencing was completely vapourized.

The concrete box beam bridge over Fishtrap Creek was burned beyond repair. Many homes were completely lost in a matter of minutes as the firestorm exploded up Highway 5 along the North Thompson River.

A small fire on Wednesday evening had turned into a massive inferno by Friday, destroying the Tolko sawmill at Louis Creek and most of the homes in the area. It is a truly devastating sight, seeing the loss of people's homes and businesses.

The Strawberry Hill fire started in the afternoon of August 1.

The fire was only the size of a pickup truck and within five to 10 minutes grew to the size of a football field. The dry sage was no rival for the fierce fires.

This large "second fire" occurred along Highway 5 near Kamloops, placing many homes, ranches and grazing areas in the precarious position of being between the fires.

Evacuation orders were issued almost immediately by the RCMP on bullhorns announcing: "The fire is here now! You must leave now!"

Both Ministry of Transportation staff and Argo staff were evacuated, and the District Manager, being one of the evacuees, spent the night in the district parking lot. This event caused the immediate

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Achievement is worth the effort

Submitted by Denise Bollinger

In January of 2001, after 10 years of study and combining full-time work with night classes into my schedule, I finally completed all the requirements to enter into the Masters of Business Administration degree program at Royal Roads University.

It took another two years of full-time university course enrollment and working to successfully complete (and pay for!) this degree.

Receiving the degree and being the recipient of the University Founder's Award for Leadership, Sustainability and Personal Development will be a memory I shall never forget.

This final ceremony really marks a goal for me that has taken commitment and sacrifice to achieve.

The RRU program is similar to other MBA programs that offer a combination of residential and virtual formats.

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Take me away...

Staff from the ministry's West Kootenay District gathered recently for a barbecue to congratulate Stephanie Gillis and wish her well on her move to Cranbrook, where she is now an Area Manager.

Practice, flexibility & commitment key for ministry staff in battle against fires

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evacuation of residents in and around the Raleigh and Heffley Creek area.

The fires came within 150 feet of people's homes. Not only were people affected, but the impact on the wildlife was staggering.

Thompson-Nicola District staff worked long hours, reacting very quickly to the changing conditions.

The incident command training was put to the test, and the district incident team consisted of:

- Liaison Officer and alternate (Stew Miller and Renee Mounteney);
- Operations Chief and alternate (Harvey Nelson and Julian Malinsky);
- Two Division Supervisors (Jeff Saby and Vern Goodwin);
- Commander (Sherry Eland);
- Support Services (Joanne Harder and Dan Bader);
- Maps and Plans (Pat Holt); and
- Damage Assessment personnel (Jurgen Lutter and Percy Parent).

To help facilitate the evacuation of residents in the surrounding areas, both the McLure and Little Fort ferries operated 24 hours a day to aid the fire fighters.

ICS training has proved to be remarkably beneficial as staff easily fell into their roles, where work was performed as a part of an integrated, dynamic and flexible team.

Argo, the highway maintenance contractor, was out swiftly, responding and assessing the damages. They were extremely flexible in meeting changing demands. As many as 13 flagging stations and rolling roadblocks were in place for three weeks. Checkpoints were manned by RCMP officers to ensure only those approved obtained access. Crews were quick to respond to elaborate evacuation routes and detours.

Argo volunteered their own toll-free 1-800 number to field calls on highway conditions, and an overwhelming 5,000 calls were received within a few days. Argo also built a temporary bridge over Fishtrap Creek so evacuees and fire fighters could gain access. A pat on the back should go to Argo staff for going above and beyond the call of duty, most notably Tom Bone, Don Lentz, Kenny Friesen and Mark Stahl.

Work is under way to complete rock scaling along Highway 5 where the fire destroyed trees, brush and roots, leading to significant rock fall. Hundreds of dangerous trees have been felled by forestry crews, and more are being removed by experts working closely with MoT, BC Hydro and Telus.

Fencing is being built to replace the lost sections before the fall cattle movements. A new bridge will be built to replace the old one we lost.

We are fortunate to live and work among so many remarkably giving people who astound us with their generosity. The overwhelming outpouring of support from people donating their time, their property, their homes, their items and their money will be one of the memories of these fires. The thoughtfulness of people will always linger.

Appreciation goes out to all other dedicated ministry staff that worked extremely long hours in PREOCs, MROCs and EOCs to assist in the protection of life, provincial infrastructure and resources, and personal properties. More information on their involvement will appear in the next issue of the Road Runner.

Bollinger: MBA leads to lots of new opportunities

(Continued from page 1)

There is also an international component to meet the growing needs of organizations that deal with global issues. I attended my final residency in Grenoble, France, which offered a cultural integration experience and a final exam, of course!

My life has definitely changed for the better, and I know it is just the beginning because now it's time to put this knowledge and experience to work. There is an incredible opportunity in these days of organizational change to help create a new and healthy environment, wherever we are working, to be as productive as we can be and reach our potential while helping each other.

It is a real privilege to work in an environment where there is support and encouragement to learn and stretch our personal limits. I am very thankful for all my fellow colleagues, friends and family that helped me along the way. The completion of this degree is as much a result of their support as it is of the hard work and all the late nights studying.

I would be very happy to answer any questions or help find information for anyone else that might be interested in pursuing this degree. Information can also be found easily on the Internet at http://www.royalroads.ca/Channels/ or for specific business programs at http://www.royalroads.ca/Channels/for+learners/prospective+learners/new+programs/default.htm.

The Okanagan-Shuswap District, under the leadership of now-retired District Manager of Transportation Dan Williams, received the first annual MoT Customer Satisfaction trophy award from Assistant Deputy Minister John Dyble for achieving the ministry's highest customer service rating for 2002.

Customers recognizing service excellence...

Who better to tell us how well we're serving our customers than our customers themselves?

When reviewing feedback from the 2002 Customer Satisfaction Survey, there was a number of ministry staff that received specific mention for providing excellent customer service. Individuals were presented with a special fleece vest in recognition of their efforts. Congratulations to everyone! Keep up the good work.

Dan Williams, DMT, Okanagan-Shuswap, presented a vest to Jeff Wiseman, Operations Manager, Penticton.

Earl Lindsay, Operations Manager, presented a vest to Robin Valentine, retired Area Manager, Rossland-Castlegar.

Dan Williams also made a presentation to Kurt Edmunds, Provincial Approving Officer, Kelowna.

Sharon Beck, District Clerk in Williams Lake, receives a fleece vest from District Manager Todd Hubner for excellent internal customer service.

Max Walker, Manager, Development Approvals, New Westminster, presenting a vest to Barry Eastman, Operations Manager, Chilliwack.

Rocky Mountain District recipients Audrey Prazinak, Development Approvals Clerk, retired; Art Caldwell, Provincial Approving Officer; Olwen Righton, Development Approvals Clerk. Jean Lubrecki, former District Clerk, was also recognized.

Ross Deveau, Development Approvals Technician, Victoria, proudly wears his vest.

An "alliance" brings rewards and gets the job done on the Kincolith Extension

Submitted by Dirk Nyland, Chief Engineer

The Kincolith Extension Project was a highway construction project to connect the Village of Kincolith, south of the Nass River in northwestern B.C., to the provincial highway system. Prior to construction of the road, the only access to the community was by boat or air.

The project consisted of construction of 24 kilometres of new roadway through steep, rocky and environmentally sensitive terrain.

It was a BC Transportation Financing Authority and Nisga'a Lisims Government joint effort, with the Ministry of Transportation acting as the delivery agent. Canada contributed about one third of the cost, BCTFA a little over half the cost, and Nisga'a Lisims Government contributed the remainder. The total project cost was estimated at $34 million.

To ensure the project was completed on time and within budget, an "alliance" process was used to deliver the project. This was new to the Province but has been successfully used in other parts of the world.

In an alliance process, a joint team of ministry designers and a private sector construction firm, working under the direction of a project director, work together to deliver the project.

The process allows for rapid changes to design to meet unanticipated field conditions, solve construction problems and take advantage of innovative or alternate ways to construct the project. The process also allows for a cash award if the alliance goals are met.

The use of the "alliance" process on the Kincolith Extension Project allowed the project to be delivered on time and within budget. The changes made to the design under this process resulted in savings of an estimated $1.68 million.

The key Ministry of Transportation personnel on the team for road works were Wilf Taekema, Kelly Mann, Denise Brummell, Frank Maximchuk and Chad Tenney. This summer, each received a cash award of $2,000.

Kevin Baskin, Chad Tenney, Wilf Taekema, Kelly Mann and Dirk Nyland

A key ministry support person on the project was Kevin Baskin, and Dave St. Thomas was key to project coordination. Each received a $1,000 cash award.

All these MoT staff were commended for readily adapting to this new process and working closely with the construction contractor staff to effectively and economically deliver this project. Congratulations on a job well done!

An opportunity of a lifetime

From June 7 to 9, Kurt Edmunds, Provincial Approving Officer, and Susan Ingram, Manager, Renewal Program, attended the Western Premiers' Conference in Kelowna at the Mission Hill Family Estate. In attendance were the premiers from Canada's four western provinces and three northern territories.

Kurt Edmunds and Susan Ingram had an opportunity to volunteer at the conference. Kurt was chauffeur for the visiting premiers' deputy ministers and the press. Susan was the delegate assistant to the premier of Saskatchewan.

Kurt and Susan comment: "Volunteering for an event of this nature was an opportunity of a lifetime. It provided brief insight to the work and commitment of those involved in these conferences and meetings held at the premiers' level. It was an opportunity to work with the various premiers' support staff, executive assistants and protocol staff and learn the history of the conferences."

Kurt Edmunds and Susan Ingram at the 2003 Western Premiers' Conference in Kelowna.

Proudly serving Canadians: celebrate making a difference

Submitted by Sharlie Huffman, Bridge Seismic Engineer

That was the theme of this year's National Public Service Week, June 15-21, to celebrate the commitment and contributions public service employees have made and continue to make in improving the lives of all Canadians. On June 17 and 18, trade shows at the Vancouver Public Library and the Victoria Convention Centre were used to showcase the various federal and provincial government services, initiatives, special programs and careers that play a strong role in building a better future for Canada. There were about 50 booths at each venue. More than 800 people attended the Victoria venue.

The Ministry of Transportation booth organized and staffed by Sharlie Huffman, Bridge Seismic Engineer and Al Szczawinski, Senior Systems Technician, had posters and a running promotional video on the ministry, highlighting who we are and what we do.

The Sea-to-Sky Highway map that was on display garnered most of the interest in Vancouver. At the Victoria venue, a large-scale model of one of the Okanagan Lake Bridge concepts was added and proved very popular. Questions ranged from employment opportunities to project intentions on the Sea-to-Sky. We even had a few complaints about road quality and accesses. Several people in Victoria asked about the "fixed link" to the Mainland. We told them that such a concept was not on the immediate horizon.

We were fortunate enough to get a good display frame that went together with little difficulty, but practising with it beforehand proved a good idea, after watching others at the show who had not! We learned that people like maps, models and tangible representations of projects that affect their area. They also like giveaways, but unfortunately we didn't have any. Some questions showed that the public has trouble knowing where our ministry jurisdiction is versus TransLink's or that of municipalities.

Many thanks for the assistance of headquarters Highway Engineering staff Ian Sturrock and Bruce Barnewall for heavy lifting and moving as well as Sharon Wilder for booth relief.

For more information and photos, go to http://www.bcpublicservice.ca.

A note from the editor

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this fall issue of the Road Runner.

The Road Runner should be all about the people in the ministry, including your work, your life milestones and achievements and your contributions to your communities.

I'd like to encourage everyone to start thinking about contributions for the next issue. The Road Runner's content depends completely on your contributions.

If you have any suggestions, stories, photos, original cartoons, poems or just want to chat about the Road Runner, don't hesitate to give me a phone call or send an e-mail.

— Cindi Trowbridge

Seeing Through the Eyes of Others

We sometimes see the dance in others when they don't see it in themselves.

Just as they see the dance in us when we are still blind to it.

Each of us has the power to turn on the lights for the other.

— Barry Oshry

Ministry receives CAA recognition

For the past several years, the Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA) has recognized outstanding contributions by its members and supporting agencies by awarding the Kokanee Glacier Summit Awards.

These awards are handed out at the CAA's Annual General Meeting each year in Penticton.

For the winter of 2002/03, the recipient of one of those awards, the Benefactor Award, was the Ministry of Transportation, in recognition of its support to the Canadian Avalanche Industry by publishing and printing 63 issues of the Avalanche News over the past 24 years.

This has been an arrangement supported by previous avalanche program managers Geoff Freer and Jack Bennetto.

The ministry was also recognized for its involvement in hosting the recent International Snow Science Workshop that attracted over 600 participants from over 20 countries around the world.

Current Avalanche Programs Manager Mike Boissonneault accepted the Benefactor Award on behalf of the ministry and has since passed it on to Deputy Minister Dan Doyle.

Mike was also recognized as the Professional Member of the year for his work in developing explosive avalanche control procedures and lesson plans.

Mike Boissonneault, Avalanche Programs Manager, with Dan Doyle, Deputy Minister

Missed plane, missing medal highlight Kamloops Recognition Awards event

Submitted by Norm Parkes, A/Regional Manager, Engineering

On May 20, Minister of Transportation Judith Reid and Deputy Minister Dan Doyle were to present Deputy Minister's Recognition Awards to five recipients.

The ceremony was scheduled for 4:30 p.m. At 3 p.m. we got a call from Dan Doyle advising that he had missed his plane and wouldn't make it to Kamloops until 6:30 p.m.

We scrambled a little, found an alternate speaker and moved forward with the presentations on time.

During her opening comments, the minister asked people to come up with their best "Dan missed the plane" joke.

It was suggested that while it may be a career-limiting move for staff to send these jokes directly to Dan, if they sent them to her she would be sure to pass them on.

At the same time as we got the call from Dan saying he had missed his plane, we got a call from the people setting up the room to say one of the medals was missing.

When the minister arrived she immediately noticed there were five plaques and four medals.

We explained that one of the medals had gone missing. As we were adjusting the tables to make it easier to hand the plaques and medals to the minister, we discovered the missing medal under the table.

At the same time, the photographer took one of the plaques to get a close up picture.

When the Minister walked by again she did a double take as she saw there were now five medals but only four plaques!

REMINDER: Don't forget to submit your nominations for the next Deputy Minister's Recognition Awards by January 31, 2004. Information can be found at: http://gww.th.gov.bc.ca/Content/Recognition.Award/recognitionaward.asp

A VIHP environmental legacy

Submitted by Deborah Miller, Manager, Land Survey & Tenure

The transfer of 47 hectares along the Vancouver Island Highway Project (VIHP) this summer to Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) is helping ducks and fish while cutting red tape.

Ducks Unlimited Canada works on behalf of the waterfowl resource throughout North America to conserve key wintering, breeding and migration habitats. They support over 400 wildlife species in Canada.

Six properties valued at $700,000 were secured by the VIHP as part of a negotiated environmental protection plan which partially mitigated the impacts resulting from highway construction and use of the new facility.

DUC will manage the properties in partnership with The Nature Trust of B.C. and will receive matching funds for the value of the properties from the U.S. parent organization to acquire additional wetlands and estuaries in coastal B.C. Each property has a covenant in place to ensure that they are used in perpetuity as environmental mitigation areas.

In addition to providing wetlands for ducks and other waterfowl, these properties also contain fish habitat.

DUC will be responsible for all costs associated with maintenance of these special areas.

The direct transfer of the properties to Ducks Unlimited at a nominal fee of $1 instead of transferring them first to the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection is a streamlined approach and reduces administration for all involved.

On July 18, a ceremony was held onsite at Morrison Creek to celebrate and officially recognize the property transfer.

Gregg Singer accepted a DUC award on behalf of the VIHP properties staff and Sean Wong, Ministry of Transportation Environmental Officer.

It is inscribed: "Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program partners gratefully acknowledge the donation of lands by the Ministry of Transportation to be conserved for the wildlife and people of British Columbia in perpetuity. July 18, 2003."

Gregg Singer with award presented by Ducks Unlimited Canada

OECD sponsors work on long-life pavement

Submitted by Mike Oliver, Chief Geotechnical, Materials and Pavement Engineer

I have had the privilege to work on an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development committee on the development of long-life pavements. Many thanks go out the ministry's executive and to Transport Canada for providing the funds. The committee membership was international and the work provided a fantastic opportunity to look at the paving materials and methods employed by many other countries.

My assignment on this working committee involved determination of worldwide paving practices with associated costs and economics. To this end, I developed, distributed and analyzed a questionnaire that was sent to many countries to provide the basis for an economic comparative analysis between the more expensive, high-technology pavement materials and conventional materials.

Of interest, it was found that stone mastic pavements, coarse gap graded aggregate with a mastic or matrix of mineral filler and fibres (with little or no sand), are the pavements of choice in the OECD member countries in Europe and in the Nordic countries. Open-graded friction course pavements are widely used in urban settings in many countries, primarily for noise reduction benefits.

Superpave and conventional dense-graded pavements are used primarily in North America, with Superpave approaching the gradation and properties of stone mastic pavements. The conventional dense-graded pavements, although less expensive, are being used but are not

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All pavements are not created equal

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considered the pavement of choice for high-traffic facilities.

Also of interest was the finding that the pavements in the United States and in Europe are significantly thicker than the pavements used in Canada, particularly those used in British Columbia.

Mike Oliver

The economics of using thicker gravels with thinner asphalts was of benefit to our highway budgets in the past and has served us well. We can do this mainly because we have the advantage of good gravel deposits in relatively close proximity to projects, although gravel is becoming more difficult and more costly to obtain. Gravels in other countries are becoming very expensive and in relative terms we still have a good situation here.

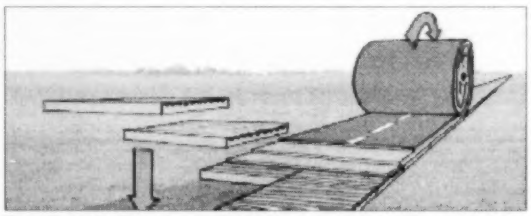
The study also involved the new or high-technology pavements used mainly on bridge decks. These more expensive pavements consist of epoxies or polymers or even more elaborate materials. In British Columbia, we have used epoxy asphalt on the Lions Gate Bridge and polymer-modified asphalts on the Port Mann Bridge and on small demonstration projects. When compared to conventional asphalts, these pavements should last longer, and therefore the maintenance and rehabilitation requirements would be reduced.

The economic comparison was based on life-cycle costing and included initial costs, maintenance costs and strategies and also road-user costs. The overall conclusions were that the new high-technology pavements have good potential for use in new construction on high-traffic facilities. Even though these pavements are expensive, with consideration of road-user costs and reduced long-term maintenance, they can be considered economically viable.

The following is a brief background for the project. The asphalt cement suppliers have provided, for years and years, a reasonable and quality asphalt product. However, at the same time, the industry has not changed significantly and has not been overly committed to provide research and investment in new or better products.

Meanwhile, the continued growth of road traffic and the continued demand by the public for better value for money places growing pressures on road agencies to come up with new solutions. At the same time, the costs of the disruption and congestion during road closures on high-volume roads have become unacceptably high, thus enhancing the need for long-life road infrastructures.

What is clear is that there is a need to stimulate the development of even more durable pavement types and, not surprisingly, industry has so far not undertaken this challenge to any significant extent.


The "Rollable Road," a prefabricated wearing course used in the Netherlands

Based on this background, the project has been initiated. It can be viewed as a challenge to both industry and road agencies to begin work on new pavement materials that can meet the future demands of heavy traffic. Longer-life pavement-wearing courses are seen as a significant contribution to reduce the costs of future maintenance and to reduce overall traffic disruption.

Today, pavements with bitumen or cement binders dominate the market. They function well in a wide range of traffic and climate conditions and have few environmental disadvantages. Although quality products are available, most pavements exhibit shortcomings in terms of long-term durability, repair requirements and road-user qualities.

It is well known that various types of synthetic binders, alone or as modifiers to conventional binders, may offer very durable, low noise, wear-resistant pavements. These pavements provide good protection of the underlying structure and can be constructed with minimum disruption to traffic. Such materials have so far almost exclusively been used on bridges, where the higher initial costs are easily justified by the benefits of longer life and better protection of the structure. However, with such characteristics, these pavement materials can be considered for the much wider application for use on heavily travelled highways.

Currently, industry-based research is focused on the traditional binder materials, partially because of costs of advanced binders and partially because road agencies show little inclination to accept higher initial pavement costs. Therefore, it does not appear likely that the industry on its own initiative will push for innovation. This situation perhaps may change if the analyses show that the properties of alternative binders, when total service life is considered, can attract a very large and increasing market.

I have been very happy to contribute and provide a British Columbian perspective for Phase I of this project.

A fond farewell for Terry Walton

After 32 years of public service, Terry Walton retired as South Coast Region's Project Director at the end of August.

On September 11, a luncheon was held in Terry's honour at the Eagle Creek Golf Course on Burnaby Mountain.

It was attended by 104 of Terry's colleagues, family and friends.

Many of us appreciated the thank you note that Terry sent to everyone:

I'd like to thank everyone who came to my luncheon, signed my retirement book or contributed to my retirement gift.

I am really enjoying the golf clubs and hat. Who knows, they might even improve my game now that I have time to work on it!

Those of you who were at the luncheon will already know that I was touched by the contributions you all made to a wonderful day for me and my family.

I am proud to have been a part of the Ministry of Transportation and very lucky to have spent all thirty-two years of my working life with the ministry.

The ministry has gone through major changes over my career, some of them difficult at the time but it has always rallied and gone on to greater things.

I'm confident that the ministry will rally once again and continue to be a great place to work that offers a high level of job satisfaction through seeing what is accomplished but also is an environment where people truly care for and enjoy working with each other. I wish you luck in the future and will always think fondly of my time with you.

— Terry Walton

Terry with his wife, daughters and friend (above), and with Dan Doyle, Deputy Minister (top).

Those hard workin' and hard learnin' YEPs...

Over the summer the ministry had 13 Youth Employment Program (YEP) students working in Field Services in a variety of different positions throughout the province. YEP provides employment opportunities for students in the public service and at the same time they gain practical work experience. YEP students are individuals who have been enrolled in full-time studies at an accredited educational intuition within the six months of hiring. Here is what just some of those students had to say about working for the ministry over the summer.

Paul Bourdon is 22 years old and has completed his second year of Civil Engineering at UBC.

This astute young man has been a valuable asset to the Field Services crew, having performed various duties throughout some paving projects.

His work experience has included being trained for lab testing duties, core drilling, project data collection, road inspector for a hot-in-place recycling project and various office duties.

His engineering interests lies with transportation, bridge structures, water resources and hydrology. Paul has enjoyed his work experience with the Ministry and looks forward to the rest of the season.

Paul Bourdon

Lowell Constable

Lowell Constable - I am a second year Civil Engineering student who had the opportunity this summer to join survey crews on jobs in both Fort St. John (Taylor Hill) and Terrace (Lava Lake). I was new to the construction field, and my learning curve was extremely steep, particularly during the first couple of months. I found the men and women on the crews

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Today's summer students to become tomorrow's transportation experts

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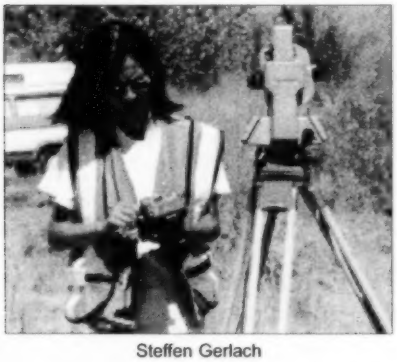
extremely helpful and candid when it came to sharing knowledge. The practical experience gained by a student immersed in a construction atmosphere is invaluable to budding engineers and can only broaden the abilities of that student to envision future designs. I am grateful for the experience I had this summer. The Ministry could attract more engineering students into working subsequent terms by including more interaction with professional engineers into the YEP program, and more opportunities for the student to apply engineering knowledge.



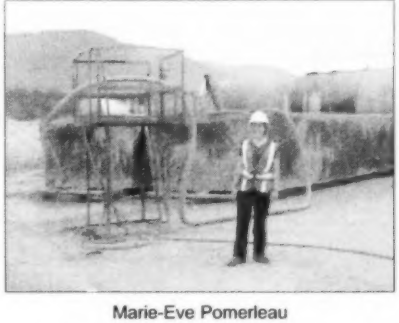
Steffen Gerlach

My name is **Steffen Gerlach**, and this is the first time I've worked for the ministry.

Prior to this job I knew little about the paving process and the responsibilities of the ministry, but over the summer this changed. I worked in Vanderhoof, then went to Smithers and was later moved to Dawson Creek. So I got to see quite a bit of B.C. I did a variety of work including marking centerline, testing crusher aggregate, taking measurements, testing for asphalt content, checking compaction, office work, taking pictures and surveying. I enjoyed working for field services very much and feel it was good experience personally and professionally.

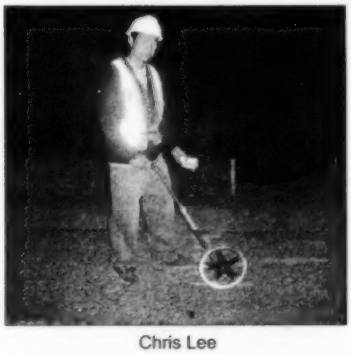
Mark Soneff

Mark Soneff - As a summer student with the Ministry of Transportation, I have learned an enormous amount about paving and how the government undertakes its quality assurance. From gaining experience in the asphalt lab finding densities, gradations and AC contents, or knowing how to interpret the contract and the 502/515 appendix, even for tasks as simple as chaining the highway, I was always able to learn. The field services crew I worked with was extremely knowledgeable and would easily explain material I didn't understand.



Marie-Eve Pomerleau

Marie-Eve Pomerleau worked with Brian Twiname's Field Services paving crew in the Terrace area. Marie-Eve has assisted Brian Barnes in the lab and transported samples from our various jobs. She was able to see most of the northwest, including Kitimat, Terrace, Meziadin and the Nass Valley. Marie-Eve has been involved in aggregate production, conventional paving and hot-in-place recycling.



Chris Lee

Chris Lee - During my work term in the youth employment program -YEP, I have learned the aspects of the quality assurance program in relation to construction and the responsibility of the contractor. Also, I have learned the basics of contract writing, estimating quantities required for future contracts and criteria for bonus/penalties for end product specification reports. The YEP was an excellent program that gave me additional experience in civil engineering.

Tosh M. Nagasaka

Tosh M. Nagasaka - I have spent the summer on Brad Rikley's paving crew

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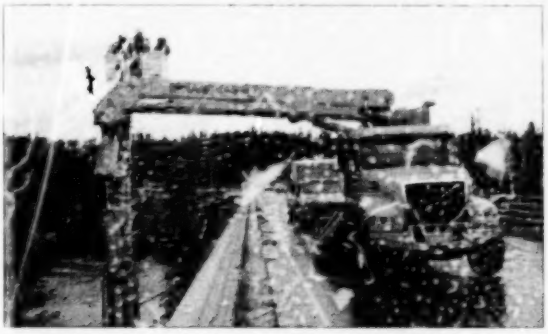
A drop in the bucket



The Ministry of Transportation Snooper truck in the process of inspecting the Stuart Bridge near Fort St. James. In the bucket are Chris Thornhill, Mike Rutledge, and Jen McConnachie.

Submitted by Jen McConnachie, Fort George District

Like many motorists at large, prior to three months ago I was not consciously aware of the significance of the many structures spanning British Columbian waterways. To me they were simply a part of the road, helping me to get to my destination.

As an environmental scientist, I was mindful of potential ecological issues, but other concerns eluded me.

We cross over and under bridges during the mundane commute to work or on adventures to the great outdoors (hopefully the latter more than the former), naive to the possibility of corrosion, deck wear or even structural failure.

Yet there are certain people out there who invest a great deal of time and energy to ensure safe travels, and they do this by hanging out in a bucket all day.

The public may unknowingly take them for granted, but Rees Davidson and Mike Rutledge, the operators of the bridge truck, or the Snooper series 260-B, that travels province-wide visiting a variety of structures, are essential to the bridge inspection team. These guys spend the majority of the year travelling from bridge to bridge ensuring the safety of road-bound British Columbians.

As a member of the Fort George District Youth Employment Program, I was very excited to climb into the bucket and descend below the decks of several bridges in the area.

I was the envy of many Ministry of Transportation staff here, and it is rumoured that another YEP even begged to come along. With Mike at the helm and Rees' watchful eye above us, I was able to witness the process of bridge inspection first-hand.

Like a curious child, I attempted to adopt the lingo of structural components, mitigation strategies and key areas of potential deterioration. My intrigue was evident, and I tried to absorb as much information as I could, but the most important take-home message was that these fellas deserve considerable respect.

Rees, Mike and the Snooper truck do a job that saves lives, the environment, and the road network-a large responsibility that they accept without question.

So, next time you are travelling and your path crosses a bridge, think about what your trip would be like if something went terribly wrong. Then be thankful that we have guys like Rees and Mike on our side looking out for us from the vantage point of the Snooper's bucket.

Julian Malinsky earns MBA on-line

Submitted by Julian Malinsky, District Business Manager, Thompson-Nicola District

I recently received a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Athabasca University's Centre for Innovative Management. A friend planted the MBA seed 20 years ago, but unfortunately bad timing and work were barriers at the time.

Athabasca University specializes in long-distance education. Their MBA program is offered via the Internet, in a virtual classroom setting provided on state-

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Youth Employment Program (cont'd)

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in Dawson Creek. The first six weeks where spent nailing centerline, which consisted of nailing approximately 2500 nails into the highway over about 50 km. I was also given a chance to run the transit on several occasions. The last six weeks I have spent in the lab. I have done about 100 vacuum saturations, at least a dozen burns, dozens of wash tests and pounded dozens of briquettes. When time has permitted Wayne McCarvill has shown me around the job sites, which have included road build-up, hot in place recycle, crushing, and top lift. I have learned a lot this summer about the responsibilities of the Ministry of Transportation and the type of work that Ministry employees do. It is an opportunity that I have appreciated.

Bruce McClintock

Bruce McClintock, a YEP student in the Courtenay area, worked in the office and on the Highway 19 Elk Falls to Roberts Lake shoulder project. Bruce was born and raised in the Comox Valley, and he's attending the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

New twist meets Tahsis Road challenge

Doug Wright, area manager for Campbell River, reports that he continues to try kicking the gravel habit and has applied 2.5 kilometres of graded aggregate seal on the Tahsis Road.

The road serves as the only access to the community of Tahsis, has grades of up to 20 per cent and is used by 120-tonne loaded logging trucks.

To meet the challenges of the extreme rainy weather on the West Coast of Vancouver Island and the heavy loads, a new twist was tried to some old techniques.

The new twist was the application of CSS 1, a cationic prime, over sections stabilized with magnesium chloride.

In this exercise the CSS 1 was utilized to penetrate, seal, strengthen and provide a bonding surface for the subsequent application of HF 150 P.

Ludvik Mazuk was retained to provide technical expertise and document stabilization of this and other hard surfacing efforts on the Tahsis Road.

CSS1 (above) applied over magnesium chloride stabilization. Application was a mixture of 0.5 litres CSS1 and 0.6 litres water per square metre.

A sand cover applied over the CSS1 permits single lane traffic. Shades Tanker Services applies bottom lift Class A graded aggregate seal.

Ludvik looks well, and even though he no longer works directly for the ministry, he still retains a keen interest in surfacing techniques.

Generally, the work went well. Doug reports that the application of CSS 1 as a prime for chip seal did present a few in-process curves that could have been avoided with a little experience.

With the application of CSS 1, costs for the work increased by about 10 per cent.

For Doug, this project was not just another job; it was a reflection of Ministry of Transportation Service Plan values in that it served community goals, was cost effective, pursued excellence and utilized a little innovation.

Malinsky: MBA course exceeded all expectations

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of-the-art, specially-designed Lotus software. The quality of learning in this online method was much superior to the traditional "brick & mortar" environment. An Advanced Graduate Diploma in Management and MBA degree were attained within three years while working full-time.

Courses included everything from strategic marketing and human resource management to public consultation and public sector management.

I also attended two weekend schools, in Calgary and Edmonton, and one summer school in the United Kingdom at Cranfield University, one hour north of London. The school included lectures at the university and several businesses and a lecture in the London Parliament Building by a member of Parliament on the UK & the European Union.

My final project dissertation was on the Ministry of Transportation Sign Shop Business, which included several surveys and interviews. Thank you to those who provided the necessary input.

Julian Malinsky

The three-year program was a significant commitment, including 30 to 40 hours of studies per week and high tuition and travel costs. My wife Gail's support was critical.

The diversity of professors and students added to the uniqueness of the learning experience. Two or three professors delivered each course, and they came from universities across Canada and the United States.

Class sizes ranged from 20 to 40 students, including managers and professionals from various organizations, backgrounds and locations around the world, such as Russia, the U.S. and Hong Kong.

The courses integrated group assignments, which promoted teamwork and a collaborative approach to problem solving and decision-making.

My goal was to expand my horizons and experience a new challenge. Happily, the course exceeded all my expectations and remains one of my life's highlights.

Program information is available at www.athabascau.ca/mba/. Feel free to e-mail or call me at 250 314-6130 if you have any questions.